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BRITISH COLUMBIA The Best Place on Earth
Ministry of Education
EDUCATION REPORT

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Message from Minister Shirley Bond

Honourable Shirley Bond, Minister of Education

When StrongStart BC early learning centres were started in 2006, the goal was to help prepare children for school. The success of the StrongStart BC program has exceeded our expectations and this province is a leader in early learning.

There are 175 StrongStart BC centres open now, with 25 more to come by the end of this school year. Every school district has at least one StrongStart BC centre, and communities from Agassiz to Zeballos have a centre to call their own.

Last week, I had the pleasure of meeting with more than 200 StrongStart BC facilitators in Vancouver at their annual conference. There, I was encouraged to hear stories of children learning and growing, of families learning together, and of early childhood educators being leaders in their communities.

Children, parents and caregivers who come to a StrongStart BC centre enjoy a unique experience. Through arts, playtime, storytime and other play-based activities, StrongStart BC facilitators help children develop their full potential. Every time I visit a StrongStart BC centre I am impressed by the enthusiasm for this program. It is certainly providing new opportunities for children and their families right across the province.

Congratulations and thank you to all our partners who have helped make StrongStart BC such a resounding success!

Drop Everything and Read

Minister Shirley Bond took part in the "Drop Everything and Read" challenge on Monday, October 27. The challenge was an initiative of the B.C. Teacher-Librarians' Association, as part of the National School Library Day. At 11 a.m., people across B.C. were encouraged to drop everything they were doing and read for 20 minutes.
Read more.

HOT TOPIC

Tonight is Halloween and while it's a fun time for everyone, there are some safety precautions families can take to ensure the evening is a safe one.

Try to make your child's costume as bright as possible, so they are visible to motorists while they trick-or-treat. Face paint is a great idea to get that spooky effect and it is safer than a mask that can slip over your little one's eyes. And motorists, please take extra care when driving through neighbourhoods tonight. A little pirate or princess could run out on the road without looking. Please be extra cautious on the roads tonight.

When the trick or treating is done for another year, take a few moments to inspect your child's treats. Throw away any loosely-wrapped candy or suspicious-looking goodies. Encourage your children to enjoy their treats in moderation.

Some pre- and post-trick or treating ideas are serving your children a healthy and hearty meal before they head out the door so they don't eat any treats before you've had a chance to inspect them.

Halloween is an enjoyable time for children and their families. With a few extra steps to ensure their safety and health, your whole family can enjoy all the things that go bump in the night!

Reading Corner

This month's book comes from the East Coast where they are celebrating the 100th anniversary of "Anne of Green Gables." Renowned children's author Budge Wilson penned "Before Green Gables" as a prequel to the original L.M. Montgomery novel. The book takes us through Anne's life with loving parents to moving into an orphanage and at last moving to Prince Edward Island for adoption. This is a story of determination and love and is suitable for older elementary students.

Before Green Gables
Budge Wilson

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